Conference-based online social network combining gamification:
Enhancing researchers' knowledge sharing

By: Eran Temstet

Supervised by: Dr. Irit Hadar & Dr. Meira Levy

ABSTRACT

This project aimed to examine the possibility of improving the knowledge sharing process before, during and after conferences among researchers by using a conference-based online social networks (OSN). In order to increase engagement in such an OSN, we integrated gamification components, including points, leaderboard, and badges. The study intended to examine the manifestation of the researchers' knowledge sharing process via the gamified OSN. The OSN was implemented in the 9th International Workshop on Cooperative and Human Aspects of Software Engineering (CHASE'16), collocated with the International Conference of Software Engineering (ICSE'16), which took place in Texas on May 16, 2016. Authors of accepted papers were invited to use the OSN in order to share thoughts, engage in discussions, rank contributions, study accepted papers, post feedbacks and so forth. Examining the activity within the OSN and eliciting feedback via a follow-up survey, we sought to understand how the blend of these components may enhance the level of participation and knowledge sharing via the OSN. Our findings show that the OSN facilitated some communication between researchers and enabled the participation of co-authors, who did not attend the conference, in the discussions around papers. Feedbacks indicated that only some of the gamification elements encouraged engagement, and only to a limited extent. Finally, while the activity at the OSN was rather vivid during the workshop day and toward it, it stopped completely as soon as the workshop ended. Future research may examine additional gamification elements and their effectiveness for increasing engagement, as well as seek additional added value that may be provided by the OSN, in order to facilitate continuous year-round discussions.